

REMARKS

In the Action, claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite in view of an amendment to original claim 1. Also, claim 14 was rejected under §112 as being unclear and indefinite. By this Amendment, the claims have all been revised to overcome the §112 rejections.

On the merits, claims 1, 4-10, 12-15, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Schneider et al. (U.S. Patent 6,808,198). In addition, claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Schneider et al. and claims 1, 3-5 and 10-15 were rejected under JP 10-138858 in view of Schneider et al. Finally, claims 17, 19 and 20 were allowed.

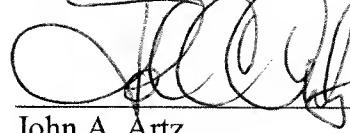
By this Amendment, many of the claims have been revised in order to overcome the Examiner's rejections. (In addition, a few claims have been withdrawn and cancelled.) Independent claim 1 has been revised to further define the guide member and its operation. The guide member is releasably secured to the panel member and forms a part of the trim configuration of the panel member. The guide member is also adapted to be moved (e. g. rotated) to a second ramp configuration position where it can direct the deployment of the airbag in a predetermined direction. The guide member is releasably connected to the panel member and when rotated is supported by the panel member in the second position. This provides precise direction for the deployment of the airbag.

As stated in other claims, in preferred embodiments, the guide member is rotatably connected to the panel by at least one tether member, and the guide member is releasably connected to the panel by a mating anchor and aperture mechanism.

It is submitted that neither the two references relied upon by the Examiner disclose or suggest the Applicant's invention. In particular, the two references have unsupported flap members which cannot precisely direct the deployment of an airbag.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that all of the claims remaining in the case, namely claims 1, 3-4, 6-7, 10-12, 15, 17 and 19-23, are in proper form and patentably distinguish from the prior art. Accordingly, allowance of the claims and passage of the application to issuance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Artz', is written over a horizontal line.

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